

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) A ~~low-profile~~ control device for a computer, the control device comprising:

a) a fixed mounting;

b) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y components of force transmitted thereto; and

c) a control member acted upon in the x and y directions by at least two spaced-apart fingertips of a user and mounted for limited travel in the x and y directions on said fixed mounting, said control member being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said components of force thereto,

said control device having a profile which is sufficiently low to enable it to be accommodated in the thickness of a base portion of a clamshell design laptop computer.

22. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control member has a substantially horizontal fingertip-engaging control surface.

23. (currently amended) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control member ~~has~~ is a platform with an upright fingertip-engaging control surface.

24. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 23, wherein said control member has a height in the range 1 to 5 mm.

25. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 23, wherein said control member is disposed in a well, said well having an upright inner surface and said control member having a peripheral outer surface facing said inner surface and spaced apart therefrom to define a gap between said inner surface and said peripheral outer surface.

26. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, further comprising a substantially horizontal wrist-rest surface.

27. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 26, wherein said control member has an upper surface substantially flush with said wrist-rest surface.

28. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 26, wherein said control member has an upper surface recessed with respect to said wrist-rest surface.

29. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control member is substantially oval in plan view.

30. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control member has a horizontal dimension of at least 10 mm.

31. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 30, wherein said dimension is at least 20 mm.

32. (currently amended) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for restricting travel of said control member ~~in said plane~~ to 50 mm or less.

33. (currently amended) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for restricting travel of said control member ~~in said plane~~ to 30 mm or less.

34. (currently amended) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for restricting travel of said control member ~~in said plane~~ to 10 mm or less.

35. (currently amended) The control device according to claim 21, comprising means for substantially preventing movement of said control member in ~~the x-y plane~~ said x and y directions.

36. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said control member is mounted on a pivot mounting for enabling rotation of said control member in the x-y plane by said user.

37. (previously presented) A keyboard incorporating a control device according to claim 21.

38. (previously presented) A computer incorporating a control device according to claim 21, the computer having a display and cursor control circuitry for displaying a cursor on said display, an output of said control device being coupled to said cursor control circuitry for controlling the movement of said cursor.

39. (previously presented) The computer according to claim 38 which is a laptop computer having a keyboard and a wrist-rest area disposed adjacent to said keyboard and wherein said control device is located in said wrist-rest area.

40. (currently amended) A laptop computer ~~having~~ comprising a base portion having a thickness, a wrist-rest surface formed in said base portion and a pointing device located adjacent to said wrist-rest surface, said pointing device comprising:

- a) a fixed mounting below said wrist-rest surface;
- b) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y components of force transmitted thereto; and

c) a control member acted upon in the x and y directions by a least two spaced-apart fingertips of a user and mounted for limited travel in the x and y directions on said fixed mounting, said control member being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said x and y components of force thereto,

said pointing device having a profile which is sufficiently low to be accommodated in the thickness of said base portion.

41. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, which has at least one fingertip-operable switch means carried in a peripheral region of said control member for generating a switching signal distinct from said vector output signal.

42. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 21, wherein said transducer means includes two transducers for sensing respective orthogonal x and y force components and generating vector output signal components.

43. (previously presented) The laptop computer according to claim 40, wherein a recess is formed in said wrist-rest surface and said control member is disposed in said recess, said recess having an upright inner surface and said control member having a peripheral outer surface facing said inner surface and spaced apart therefrom to define a gap between said inner surface and said peripheral outer surface.

44. (previously presented) The laptop computer according to claim 40, wherein at least one fingertip-operable switch means is coupled to said control member for generating a switching signal distinct from said vector output signal.

45. (previously presented) The laptop computer according to claim 40, wherein said control member has a height in the range of 1 to 5 mm.

46. (currently amended) A ~~low-profile~~ control device for a computer, the control device comprising:

a) a fixed mounting;

b) transducer means for generating a vector output signal in response to x and y components of force transmitted thereto; and

c) a control member acted upon in the x and y directions by at least two spaced apart fingertips of a user and mounted on said fixed mounting for limited travel, imperceptible to the user in the x and y directions, said control member being coupled to said transducer means for transmitting said components of force thereto,

said control device having a profile which is sufficiently low to enable it to be accommodated in the thickness of a base portion of a clamshell design laptop computer.

47. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 46 wherein said control member is substantially oval in plan view.

48. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 46 wherein said control member has a dimension in the x-y plane of at least 10 mm.

49. (previously presented) The control device according to claim 46, further comprising a wrist-rest surface.

50. (previously presented) A method of controlling the position of a cursor on a computer screen comprising the steps of:

a) applying x and y components of force from at least two spaced-apart fingertips of a user to a control member of a low-profile control device for said computer, said control member being mounted for limited travel in the x and y directions on a fixed mounting;

b) transmitting said x and y components of force from said control member to transducer means coupled to said control member; and

c) generating a vector output signal from said transducer means for controlling the position of said cursor in response to said x and y components of force.

51. (previously presented) A method according to claim 50, wherein said control member is mounted for travel in the x and y directions which is imperceptible to the user.

52. (currently amended) The method according to claim 50, wherein said control member has a shallow edge that ~~can be~~ is gripped and used in a way similar to the way fingers are used to push a desktop mouse.

53. (previously presented) The method according to claim 50, wherein the fingertips rest on a surface of said control member in similar relative positions as when gripping a conventional computer mouse.

54. (previously presented) The method according to claim 50, wherein the index finger and/or second finger of the user operate one or more buttons as with a desktop mouse.